



**Skills and Knowledge For  
the Future**

# **Parents with Prospects Evaluation Report**

**April 2009- December 2010**

## Contents

1. Background.....	3
2. Project Aims and Objectives.....	4
3. Projects Delivery.....	5
4. Key Achievements.....	8
5. Pastoral Care.....	11
7. Issues Arising.....	12
8. Key Recommendations:.....	14
10. Customer Feedback.....	16
11. Sustainability.....	19

## Appendices

Appendix 1 Chart 1.2 Narrative Explanation

# **1. Background**

In February 2008, Hackney Teenage Pregnancy Unit and London East Connexions Service contracted Skills and Knowledge For the Future (SKFF) to deliver a training project to young parents of the Hackney Borough. This pilot project focused on reducing the level of teenage pregnancy in Hackney in line with Government NEET to EET targets. Following its success, a year later the City and Hackney PCT commissioned SKFF to deliver another project to start in April 2009, followed by five more similar projects, the last one finishing in December 2010.

The Parents with Prospects projects' main focus was to provide training to local teenage parents, improve their self-esteem and parenting skills while enabling them to achieve an accreditation and laying the groundwork to help them to continue in EET.

The projects were run two to three times a year and had provisions to train a group of 10-12 teenage parents, who, based on their abilities, were assessed on the programme for an Entry Level 3, Level 1 or 2 qualification. Also, parents deemed a higher-level were supported with additional resources and independent research opportunities. Thus, the training programmes provided a suitable accredited training programme to combat low academic attainment levels in Hackney at level 1. The completion of each project was timed to coincide with the start of enrolment at local colleges and training providers so that young people were supported into EET.

## **2. Project Aims and Objectives**

The aim of the Parents with Prospects projects was to up-skill beneficiaries in the key areas outlined above, providing them with the skills, knowledge and confidence to unlock their potential and secure future education and development opportunities.

Specifically, the PWP projects' objectives were:

- To provide a suitable accredited training programme to combat low academic attainment levels in Hackney at level 1;
- To increase child health outcomes, as children born to young teenage mothers have 60% higher rates of infant mortality and are at increased risk of low birth weight;
- To improve poor emotional health and well being experienced by teenage mothers;
- To improve teenage parents poor economic well being;
- To increase academic attainment levels to a level 1 (and level 2) in the Borough of Hackney;
- To increase opportunities to progress onto further training, education and employment;
- To provide an inclusive programme for teenage parents, male and female;
- To provide training that will increase practical parenting skills;
- To boost young parents' confidence and self-esteem.

## **3. Projects Delivery**

### **Recruitment Process**

The main access route for young parents to enrol on the Parents with Prospects programmes was referrals from other agencies: Connexions, HYFSS, CHYPS, One Housing, St Martin of Tours Housing, and professionals: midwives as well as Open Days on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2009 and 9<sup>th</sup> June 2010 which took place at Linden Children's Centre in Hackney. The events were attended by young teenage parents between the 16 - 25 age ranges. SKFF were one of the training providers/services invited to attend this event to market and recruit young teenage parents for their programmes and provide information on advice and guidance and support agencies available to them locally.

### **Target group**

The PWP programme targeted young expectant and existing parents between the ages of 16 and 19. Information on the ethnic background of the parents registered on the programme is available below (please see chart 1.1).

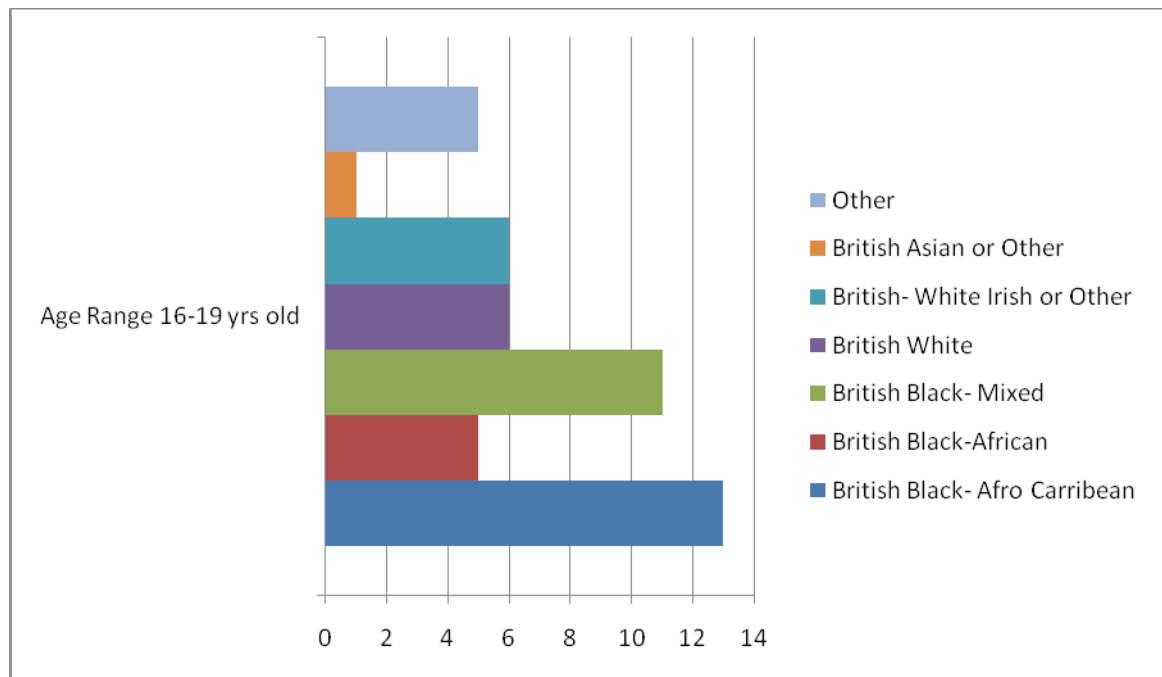


Chart 1.1.

## Venue

A successful partnership link was formed with Linden Children's Centre (86-92, Rectory Rd, London, N16 7SH) who welcomed the PWP projects as part of their overall objective to target teenage parents within the community, offer them more comprehensive support and re-engage them into education.

Linden Children's Centre provided suitable training rooms based in the upper level of the building with onsite crèche facilities for young parents' babies/children on the ground floor. The training rooms could accommodate up to 10 or even 12 learners, and provided appropriate training environment for a project of this type.

## Programme Delivery

In total, six projects have been run to date:

- March-June 2008 (Pilot)
- April to June 2009
- Sept to Nov 2009
- February to April 2010
- August to September 2010
- November to December 2010

After the success of the pilot project in 2008, the three rounds to follow (April 2009, September 2009 and February 2010) were delivered in three phases in order to better facilitate young people into EET (projects starting in August 2010 and November 2010 consisted of Phase 1 and 3):

PHASE 1: Core delivery of the Parents with Prospects accredited award (NVQ based programme), training was delivered over two days over a period of 8 weeks (May 2009 PWP Project, Entry Level 3 to Level 2 Certificate in Developing Skills in Effective Parenting) or 10 weeks (September 2009 and February 2010, Level 1 Award in Parenting), between the hours of 10.00am to 3.00pm.

Subjects covered included:

### **Induction**

- Programme and Assessment Centre Induction
- Initial Assessment

### **Parents with Prospect (NVQ Based Programme)**

#### **For the Certificate in Developing Skills in Effective Parenting:**

- Child Safety
- Bonding and Play

- Practical Parenting

### **For Level 1 Award in Parenting:**

- Developing Communication and Literacy with Children
- Developing Relationships and Play with Children
- Healthy Eating for Children
- Keeping Children Safe and Well
- Positive Parenting Skills

### **Post Programme**

PHASE 2: Strengthening Families Programme delivered by Hackney Young Family Support Service (HYFSS) over 4 weeks 1 day a week.

PHASE 3: Transition – young people supported into EET, delivered by a multi-agency team.

Open Days (August 2009 and June 2010) at Linden Children's Centre– referral to local agencies and progression routes for further training and development programmes through CHYPS, Connexions, Hackney Young Family Support Service.

## **4. Key Achievements**

In terms of the project aims and objectives, the following were achieved:

- Multi Agency Work was established, aiming to provide comprehensive support to teenage mothers such as education, careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG), emotional support services and housing.
- The PWP programme was a part of the successful model for supporting young parents into EET as shown in Y-Gen report 'Achieving Excellence in Supporting Teenage Mothers' (Please



refer to [www.y-gen.co.uk/.../excellence\\_in\\_supporting\\_teenage\\_mothers\\_into\\_eet.doc](http://www.y-gen.co.uk/.../excellence_in_supporting_teenage_mothers_into_eet.doc) for more details). SKFF work on this project has played a vital part in the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership's success in addressing teenage pregnancy. Hackney's partnership and the projects working within it has been a model of best practise which have influenced the national strategy to reduce teenage pregnancy rates and the social exclusion of teenage parents.

- 67 young people showed keen interest in the Parents with Prospects project, 47 were registered on the programme and more than 19 (data from the Nov-Dec 2010 PWP Project to be confirmed) received an accreditation between April 2009 and December 2010 (see diagrams 1.2. and 1.3. below).

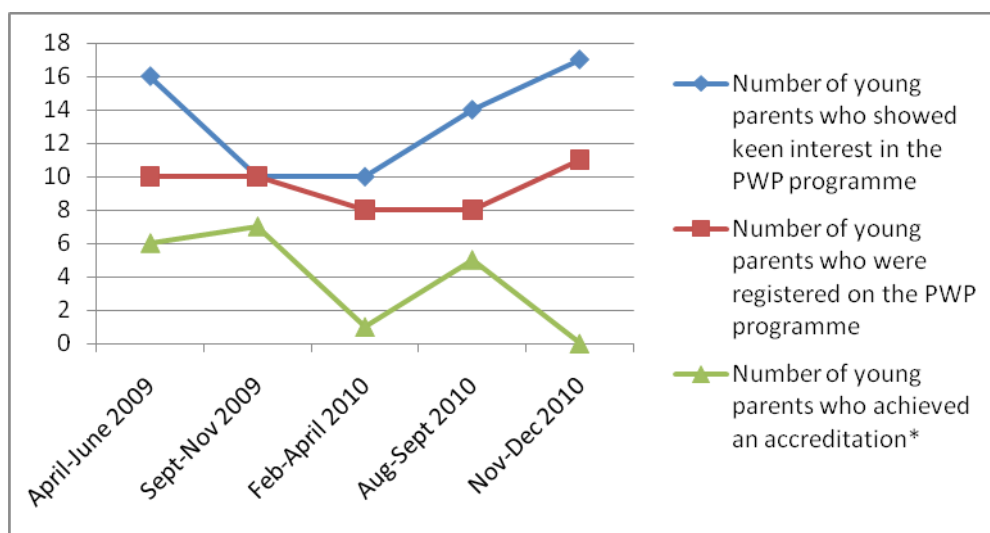
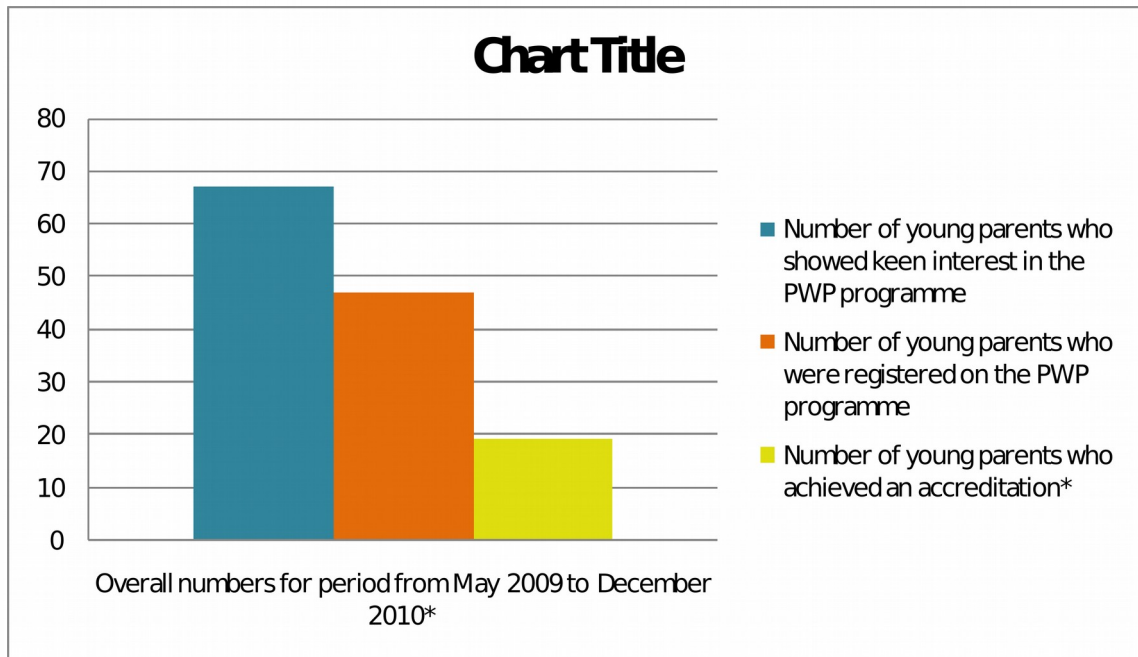


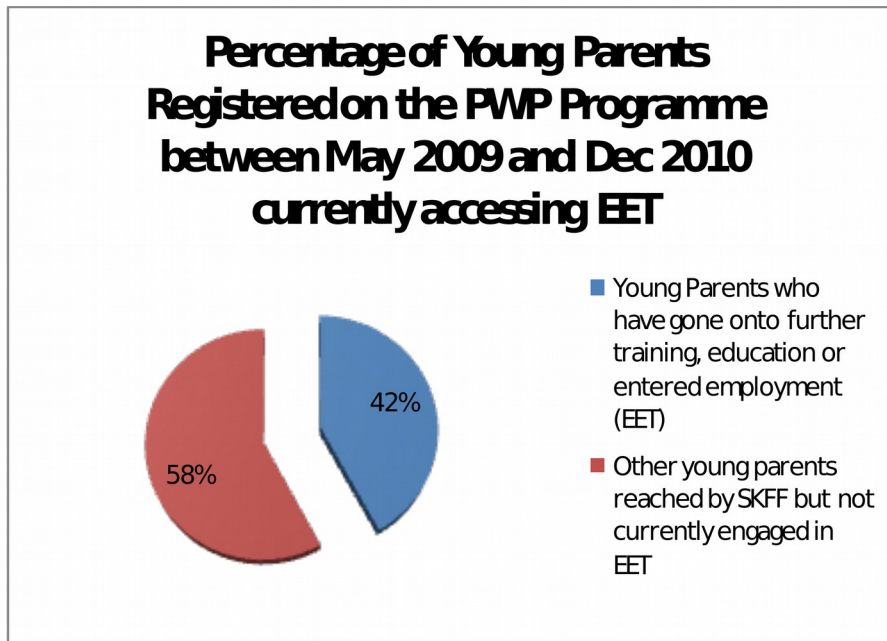
Chart 1.2 Please see Appendix 1 for further explanation



1.3.

\* Please note that the number of young parents to achieve an accreditation from the last PWP project (November-December 2010) is yet to be confirmed and therefore was not included in the above diagram. Hence, the number given as 'young parents who achieved an accreditation' only reflects the period from April 2009 to September 2010.

- All beneficiaries have experienced a significant increase of self-esteem, knowledge and awareness of childcare, child development and parenting skills as indicated in customer feedback.
- Out of the overall number of young parents recruited on the PWP programme, 42.6% (20 young parents) achieved a higher level qualification at level 1 and 2, and are known to have accessed EET after finishing the programme (see diagram 1.4. on the next page).



1.4.

- All young teenage parents recruited for the programme were provided with the opportunity of advice and guidance on further education/ training and development programmes.
- Valuable partnerships were formed with HYFSS, midwives and Linden Children's Centre, which proved extremely beneficial in the successful delivery of the PWP project. Also, it has been identified that SKFF and Linden Children's Centre (children and adult services) working together effectively facilitated ensuring childcare services enable teenage mothers to access EET.

## **5. Pastoral Care**

Throughout the programme SKFF have been continuously supporting parents, offering advice and guidance in terms of housing, career and college options (supporting with academic references where appropriate) and referring to relevant agencies to better support transition to EET. Also, open days at Linden Children's Centre in August 2009 and June 2010 were organised in order to raise young people's awareness of the services available to them.

Additionally, throughout the programme SKFF have been working closely with Connexions, arranging meetings for young parents to speak with Connexions personal advisors in order to receive support, advice and guidance with benefits and information on training or college options. Also, appointments will be made for the teenage parents currently recruited on the PWP programme (November-December 2010) to meet with Connexions advisor to discuss the above.

Due to pending HYFSS closure, learners not engaged with services will be referred to other agencies as appropriate to their individual needs.

## 7. Issues Arising

- Multi Agency Agreement; although this was in principle in place, the agreement needed to be more detailed and formally agreed across all agencies (HYFSS, PCT, TPP, Midwives etc) in relation to roles/ responsibilities in support of commissioned projects.
- Referral Process; the referral process proved largely ineffective, although there was a system in place for referring young parents via agencies onto the programme (i.e. completing SKFF registration forms). The major issue was sharing data (i.e. young mother contact details) across the projects. Also, often or not young parents referred onto the programme were already engaged in EET or were too disengaged due to their existing personal issues which prevented them from attending.
- Marketing; SKFF was very reliant on participating partnership agencies to market the programme. We were being informed this was due to data protection. However, often or not SKFF could not follow up these leads due to lack of data on the young parents. Renaisi, the independent reviewer, also identified this as an issue in their report, 'it is not clear whether there is a full range of formal referral routes into the project'.
- Attendance; throughout the programme it was identified that some young parents struggled to attend regularly due to various reasons i.e. financial, legal, emotional and heavy pregnancy. Other issues that the young teenage parents experienced were, housing (for example, a young teenage parent was relocating to another area); Although initially the young teenage parents were very keen to undertake the

training programme, their immediate personal issues were not taken into consideration in the referral process and this impacted on their attendance on the programme. By and large the short notice given to the young teenage parents coincide with their personal issues at that time.

- Transport; it was noted throughout the programme via the young parents that they could not afford public transport, although they were aware of Care to Learn funding, the Care to Learn application form and process being complex and the fact that this money was not readily available for them to attend the programme were mentioned as barriers.
- Pathways; SKFF was not fully aware at the initial stage of all the projects or existing services that were available to the young parents. This would have been beneficial to the project as a referral route to other funded services. Additionally, it was noted that some of these projects were commissioned at the same time which often impacted on delivery for all services and learners.
- Support Worker; at times there were no identifiable support worker to assist the young parents' personal needs. HYFSS often could not cater for all referrals.
- The extent of the work involved in the organisation and implementation of the programme to include the associated project management, delivery, assessment, curriculum development, administration (i.e. Care to Learn, PM data, qualification QA data), associated meetings and partnership collaborations involved; The amount of time and effort required to produce such a comprehensive project was underestimated as it required full-time roles. This was further compounded by the fact that new ideas for subject content were identified throughout the delivery process and following

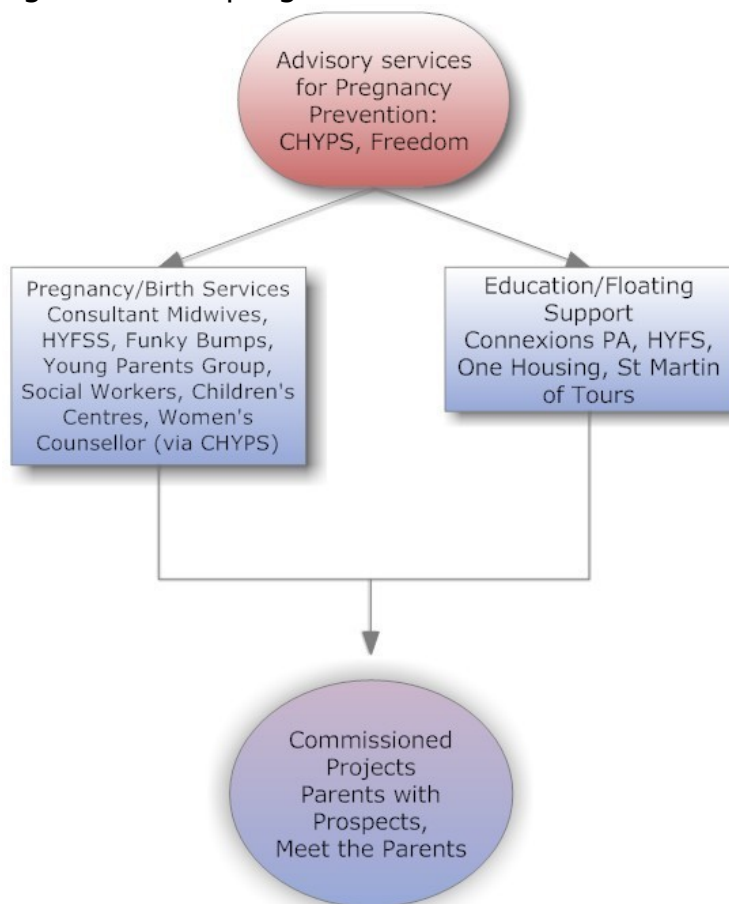
feedback from young parents. As we were keen to ensure the programme reflected actual needs of learners, we ensured, wherever possible, that these suggestions were incorporated into the modules where this was possible. This obviously impacted on the resources available during delivery, although the value of this input must not, however be overlooked, as we now have a quality, all-inclusive product to offer future beneficiaries.

## **8. Key Recommendations:**

1. Data sharing; To have access to information relating to young parents to be better equipped to cater for their individual training needs and to be able to overcome any personal difficulties they might have prior to the programme. SKFF will ensure to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and Information Commissioner's Office.
2. Marketing; as mentioned in the previous point, data sharing is imperative for effective direct marketing in relation to the PWP programme.
3. Referral Process; in line with the data sharing, there should be direct referrals to SKFF either via completing registration forms or providing all relevant contact information in order to make direct contact with the young parents. SKFF will ensure that this data sits under Data Protection Act 1998. Furthermore, It would be advisable for partner agencies supporting the project to identify at the early stage whether it is appropriate for young mothers to be referred onto an education programme, as it might be better suited to refer them onto relevant support services due to their pending personal issues as they are not quite ready to embark on an educational programme.
4. Distance Learning; To provide opportunities of distance learning for young parents who are unable to attend sessions

due to pressing personal matters or the following being already engaged in other training, heavily pregnant or haven recently delivered.

5. Transport; To consider providing local transportation via the council or arrangements for this to be part of the budget.
6. Pathways; Multi Agency Partnerships to agree a formal pathway for young parents in the borough to make NEET to EET a more efficient process, i.e. an example is given on the next page (chart 1.5.). Renaisi highlighted in their report, 'the project would benefit from developing clearer links with other agencies and programmes in order to increase recruitment'.



1.5.

7. Support Worker; SKFF will refer young parents to family support workers/floating support as appropriate to their personal needs to better support them and keep them engaged on the programme.

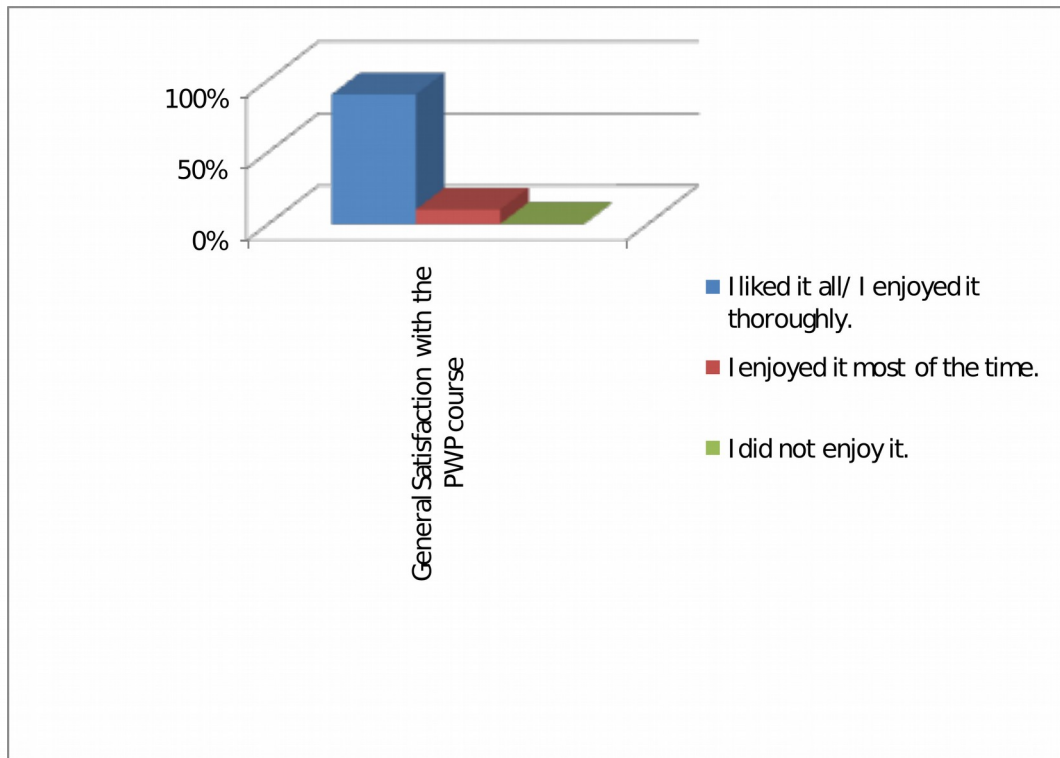


## **10. Customer Feedback**

Customer feedback was collated from the end of unit and end of programme evaluation questionnaires completed by the learners registered on the PWP programme between May 2009 and December 2010. Focus group discussions with the learners constituted an additional source of data for the report. The focus groups were conducted towards the end of the programme and were recorded by the onsite programme co-ordinator (transcript available), then the information obtained was analysed and compared against the qualitative data garnered from the questionnaires. An additional source of customer feedback was an independent Renaisi report, conducted as part of a broader programme review commissioned in the Borough of Hackney (Team Hackney).

Most importantly, the evidence gathered shows that all learners participating in the programme found it enjoyable and described the experience in positive terms, using words like ‘fun’, ‘helpful’, ‘good’ and ‘useful’ (see diagram 1.6 below). Still, the types of benefits they received from the programme as well as the topics to which they were drawn were as diverse as the students themselves. These shall be discussed in more detail in the sections below.

1.6.



Also, all learners have expressed their appreciation for the programme in building their confidence and developing parenting skills. Many have said that the programme taught them new things about parenting that they did not know. Again, the Renaisi report highlighted this: 'Parents learned new information concerning how to respond to their children. One mother now had a greater awareness of how to keep her children safe at home'. Young mothers also felt that one of the most important things they learned was dealing with temper tantrums, 'I learned more about how to handle my child when he is being naughty' (evaluation form).

As the Renaisi report states, some mothers also highlighted the knowledge of nutrition they gained from the project: "What your child can and cannot eat at what age. It was useful to know that you cannot give your child cow's milk before the age of one. My child has just turned one."

Additionally, feedback from young parents indicated that they felt supported and found the staff helpful and willing to offer them guidance and advice. This was again consolidated by the Renaisi report stating that the majority of participants felt that 'the project tends to go out of its way to support parents and help them to attend' and that any barriers to learning identified were addressed and adequate support was given by the team. Renaisi point out 'One mother was given help with her spelling as English is not her first language. The other mother had relationship issues and the staff gave her the support she needed to work through her problems'.

Last but not least, evaluations conducted as well as the Renaisi report have indicated that the majority of young parents recruited on the PWP programme felt much more motivated and positive in terms of progressing onto further training and higher education programmes: 'Showed me, with 2 kids, I am able to cope with going to college' (evaluation form) and 'Has made me think about working with children' (focus group).

Clearly, the positive feedback from the participants shows how useful the Parents with Prospects programme has been in supporting local young parents into EET. Renaisi highlight the long-term impact and benefits of the projects, 'There is clear evidence that the subjects covered on the course had changed the way the participants dealt with their children, showing improved parenting skills, and also that learning more about nutrition and safety has affected their behaviour positively. Also, participants were more positive and confident in terms of their personal development and progression onto further education and training' (Refer to the report for details).

## **11. Sustainability**

The PWP programme provided a good basis of learning which further helped to increase young teenage parent's knowledge in developing effective parenting skills, and understanding the importance of child development in addition to building their self confidence. The learning environment had a major impact on their learning, as it created an environment which was comfortable, ultimately giving young teenage parents the opportunity to discuss and share their knowledge and experiences, as well as meeting other young teenage parents they could relate to.

The key measurable outcome of this programme was the boost of interest in the young parents to further pursue their training, education and career path (42% of parents recruited on the PWP are currently in EET) after successfully achieving accreditation for completed units/award, which in turn contributed to improving the NEET to EET outcomes of the Hackney Borough.

To summarise, the PWP programme have been extremely valuable for all those taking part. The programme provides positive/traceable results towards the delivery strategy of reducing the NEET population (as shown in data on file and the Y-Gen report above).

Due to the current financial pressures on the Hackney PCT, SKFF have been advised that the sustainability of the PWP project after the end of this financial year will rest under The London Borough of Hackney -YPLA 14-19 objectives via The Learning Trust.